Arizona Statewide Communications Interoperability Plan (SCIP) Executive Summary

Vision and Mission

Creation of the Arizona Statewide Communications Interoperability Plan (SCIP) was a requirement of Section I.C.5 of the 2006 Homeland Security Grant Program which states, "By the end of 2007, each state must develop and adopt a statewide communications interoperability plan."

In accordance with this directive, the Arizona SCIP was finalized in December of 2007. It serves as a detailed reference for all public safety officials by describing the status of statewide interoperable radio communications in Arizona. The SCIP documents the specific goals and objectives established to dramatically improve public safety communications within the state.

On a very basic level, the federal directive requiring each state to develop a SCIP was initiated by those on the front line. Many first responders from distinct public safety agencies operating in the same region do not have the means to communicate with each other while on duty. First responders, whether they are assigned to a local, county, state, tribal or federal agency, can generally communicate only with personnel from their same agency. When first responders can communicate with other agencies operating in their region, it is limited, and does not provide an ideal level of on demand, real-time interoperability.

Arizona is no exception to these problems. These issues can endanger lives and property in the state because they prevent first responders assigned to different, distinct agencies from being able to effectively coordinate life-saving efforts and strategically deploy critical resources. This is especially true during day-to-day events and emergencies where multi-agency collaboration and communications is needed.

The SCIP details all of the significant accomplishments and goals already achieved in advancing first responder radio interoperability throughout Arizona and lessening these problems. However, the comprehensive document also reveals the state's complex journey towards reaching and maintaining an ideal level of interoperability for its public safety community is far from complete.

The SCIP outlines strategies that will allow Arizona to achieve all of its vitally important interoperability goals. Some of the state's interoperability goals can and will be accomplished much faster than others based on well-researched, priority levels for each goal.

In the end, the living, dynamic SCIP document will play an important role in ensuring all of the state's interoperability goals are accomplished even if new communications technologies and interoperability scenarios surface in the future requiring new strategies to be developed.

The SCIP was also formulated with awareness it could help Arizona secure federal grant funds associated with the large-scale, interoperability planning effort. The much needed federal funds associated with the SCIP could be made available to local, tribal, and state agencies in Arizona for use in advancing the very life-saving, public safety communications initiatives outlined in the plan.

To ensure the critically important SCIP document had the support of all levels of government, the Public Safety Communications Commission (PSCC), through its working group, the Statewide Interoperability Executive Committee (SIEC), convened a series of regional forums during 2007. It

sought the opinions and counsel of all participating levels of government and concerned non-governmental entities to produce a plan that would be used by all first responders in Arizona.

The results from these forums, as well as other discussions with public safety officials at the state, local, tribal, and federal levels, formed the basis for the SCIP along with its detailed goals and objectives.

The SCIP launched what Arizona intends to be an ongoing conversation between levels of government to consolidate their communications needs, based on risk-benefit models projecting evolving future requirements. This blueprint will provide a mechanism for governments to resolve shared issues and assess future common needs.

All governments (state, local, tribal, and federal) and applicable non-governmental entities should accelerate the collaborative efforts outlined in the SCIP with a single focus to embrace and maintain the spirit of the document. A summary of the established protocol designed to ensure the SCIP is reviewed and updated properly over the years is contained in this Executive Summary so that the document can continue to evolve as needed.

Goals and Objectives

In the summer of 2007, Arizona Governor Janet Napolitano set a goal for Arizona to have 85 percent of the state's population covered by interoperable communications systems within two years.

The SCIP outlines a strategy allowing Arizona to achieve this important goal that, when met, will significantly help enable the realization of a longer term plan to create a statewide, fully interoperable communications "system of systems" in Arizona.

An interoperable communications "system of systems" is a collection of functional, advanced communications systems that pool existing resources and capabilities together. This new, more complex communications "system" offers increased functionality and performance. Linking existing systems allows for interoperability and synergism of command and control through one system that appears seamless to the public safety first responder. This system sets the stage to comprehensively develop advances.

The SCIP details how the central components of this long-term plan and system will include a 7/800 megahertz (MHz) standards-based, public safety radio system, and high-level network connections to existing regional radio systems.

The state anticipates, as outlined in the SCIP, that many local and tribal entities will partner with them on the 7/800 MHz component of this system. This is based upon the needs of local and tribal governments to expand their coverage, increase interoperability, and meet the Federal Communications Commission's mandate to migrate from wideband to narrowband technology by December 2012.

The 7/800 MHz standards-based radio system will enable all emergency responders from distinct agencies to communicate with each other when required in real time.

Because the state has significant areas with little population, a Strategic Technology Reserve will also be instrumental in bringing interoperable communications to those areas that are underserved

today and will remain so for the foreseeable future. While not deployed, many of the assets of the Strategic Technology Reserve may be used for day-to-day operations.

As part of its current Strategic Technology Reserve, Arizona has a series of five communication vans strategically placed in different regions throughout the state. The locations of these vehicles enable them to be called up and on scene within three hours. In addition, the state has a number of radio caches deployed using the same mechanism. The SCIP explains how the Strategic Technology Reserve needs to be augmented.

In addition to the 7/800 MHz radio system and Strategic Technology Reserve, the SCIP reveals how the implementation of the Arizona Interagency Radio System (AIRS) will enable a basic level of interoperability for all public safety agencies in Arizona. Funding from the federal grants associated with the SCIP will be available to local, tribal, and state agencies for use in projects that support these initiatives.

The SCIP also identifies interoperability gaps and provides information that will assist the state in identifying strategies to reduce the gaps in a collaborative and timely manner.

In addition, the SCIP reveals how interoperability planning extends well beyond state levels of authority. Interoperable communications is also necessary with bordering states and countries; Arizona is currently working to formalize agreements with Sonora, Mexico as well as with its five bordering states. These agreements are discussed in the SCIP along with insight on how interoperability planning can continue to advance beyond state levels of authority.

Planned statewide interoperability, according to the SCIP, must be established at various government levels and progress forward, synchronizing partnerships along the way. Through the PSCC, the SIEC, and the SCIP, local and tribal participation is encouraged and is integral to the state's strategic planning process. Every effort will be made to gain full participation within the state. Additionally, continuing to nurture a close relationship and partnership with the state's commercial communications and non-government entities is vital for a total state emergency response.

The PSCC recognizes the critical need to plan for more than technology in solutions for a statewide interoperable communications system and its supporting operations plan. The PSCC therefore derived the multi-faceted, detailed goals and their associated objectives presented below. All are detailed at length and defined in the SCIP.

- Achieve interoperable communications covering 85 percent of the state's population
- Increase interoperability statewide
- Increase use of statewide microwave system
- Publish user-based standards and guidelines
- Create and maintain a scorecard for statewide interoperability
- Continue to review and enhance statewide strategies and activities
- Develop and implement technical alternatives to promote interoperability
- Create an outreach program to define and establish interoperability
- Develop a current inventory of equipment to define interoperability solutions
- Develop and implement statewide operational standards
- Identify and secure dedicated funding
- Obtain and sustain legislative support

- Implement tactical improvements to achieve interoperability
- Establish cross-border communications

Current State of Interoperability in Arizona

On its way towards outlining how an ideal level of public safety communications interoperability can be achieved in Arizona and how the Governor's objective can be met, the SCIP provides details on the current status of public safety communications interoperability within the state. In doing so, several key factors inherent to an ideal level of public safety interoperability are scrutinized.

Among the factors closely examined in the SCIP are the technologies used to achieve the current level of interoperability in the state as well as the current governance, Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), training and exercises, and usage associated with the state's current level of interoperability. Following is a brief summary of these criteria, along with current interoperability challenges in Arizona, as they are presented in the SCIP.

Technology

Interoperability in Arizona currently varies from public safety agency to public safety agency and from user to user as described in the SCIP. Most agencies have AIRS (or its predecessor the Interagency Arizona Radio System (IARS)) channels in their radios. Most counties in Arizona also have "gateway" units, either mobile or at communications centers where dispatching takes place, or at Emergency Operations Centers. Fire services and law enforcement agencies have caches of radios to exchange during special operations, large wildfires, or task force operations.

In the Phoenix-Mesa metropolitan area and in Yuma County, there is a "Standards-based, Shared Systems" level interoperability. Pima County is moving to a similar configuration of a standards-based, shared system as well.

State agencies within Arizona currently have limited interoperability with most other jurisdictions through the AIRS suite of mutual aid channels. This provides a basic level of interoperability as it allows only one radio channel for emergency operations in any area of the state.

The SCIP also provides a great deal of background information on the existing and critically important statewide microwave network. The network serves as the statewide radio and data transport infrastructure of the future while providing reliable communications for the state's major public safety agencies. It is the only statewide network currently in existence to fulfill this vital need.

Future communications needs and pursuit of a long-term, advanced interoperability solution for its first responders demand a stronger backbone for communications. The expansive statewide microwave network is currently in the process of undergoing significant expansion and modernization. Upgrades and additional new sites will complete the much needed transition from analog to digital radio technology. Digital is the technology standard used in all modern radio communications systems.

The statewide microwave network currently consist of more than 70 remote communications sites which provide radio communication for the Department of Public Safety, the Department of Transportation, the Department of Corrections, Game and Fish, State Land and other state and

federal agencies. Its basic function is to serve as the "life-line" for public safety field personnel, connecting them with communications dispatch centers in Flagstaff, Phoenix, and Tucson.

Governance

The Arizona PSCC is legislatively enabled and has oversight of statewide interoperability. This, along with the SIEC and the inter-regional working groups such as the Regional Advisory Councils (RACs), gives Arizona a level of governance that will allow the state to move forward with its public safety communications interoperability initiatives and improve the current level of interoperability statewide. Although this governance is in place, it would be inadequate, in its current form, for the finalized version of the proposed statewide communications solution.

Standard Operating Procedures

The SCIP notes that Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) in the state is compliant with important National Incident Management System (NIMS) standards and is integrated into Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs). SOPs, according to the SCIP, are mostly local, government driven at the current time, with relatively few that reach the state level of operations.

Training and Exercises

Arizona has training programs that cross all jurisdictions and are multi-disciplinary. The training is cyclic, thus creating a plethora of training opportunities for all state, local, and tribal entities. However, the communications training available is currently inadequate for what is needed and what will be required of users of an advanced interoperable statewide radio system.

Usage

AIRS is used routinely by many jurisdictions to achieve interoperability. When surveying local law enforcement responders, they advise they use AIRS when they need it, but could not give any details regarding how often they access it. It is believed, however, AIRS is used more often for localized emergency incidents than regional interoperability. As AIRS is still being constructed throughout the state, it is believed that its use will increase as its availability increases.

Local governments report the use of interoperable communications is routine and developed on a jurisdictional level rather than an over-arching statewide protocol. A table in the SCIP evidences this local interoperability design. Because of local government's efforts, they are mostly interoperable with those that they rely on for day-to-day operations and most emergencies. When the local government's needs are beyond their capacity, those governments typically contact the Department of Emergency and Military Affairs (DEMA) for additional communications equipment and the enabling of more advanced interoperable communications capabilities.

It should be noted that AIRS, although useful, is only the first step to long-term radio interoperability as it is not a comprehensive, advanced or robust communications system.

Interoperability Challenges

In addition to the "normal" challenges for interoperable communications: money, governance, and technology, Arizona faces several unique challenges. Particularly, the size and terrain of the state present special challenges, and the fact that a large area of the state is uninhabited presents

additional challenges not normally experienced by most states. These two factors increase the fiscal impacts of a statewide interoperable radio system substantially.

In addition, the size and terrain of the state can influence the types of communications technology used from region to region.

In addition, as with all other statewide communications systems, cost and governance are always problematic and present significant challenges.

Each challenge identified above has specific strategies outlined in the SCIP that should increase the likelihood of mitigating issues associated with them.

Strategic Initiatives and Implementation

The PSCC has a series of important strategic initiatives which are detailed at length in the SCIP. All of the initiatives support the eventual build-out of a 7/800 MHz fully interoperable radio system for the state of Arizona as a part of its overall interoperability solution. What follows are very short summaries of the strategic initiatives outlined in the SCIP. Additionally, each initiative was given a prioritization level and implementation time frame. Specific action plans for realizing strategic initiatives within their designated time frames along with critical milestones, metrics, and challenges/hazards related to accomplishing the initiatives are detailed at length in the SCIP. The timeframes accompanying each initiative must be met to maximize each initiative's effect.

Strategic Initiative #1 – Develop AIRS

Description: The PSCC will continue to update and build out the AIRS suite of interoperability systems. These updates will improve AIRS coverage and provide additional users both within and outside of Arizona with connectivity through the system. By design, AIRS is compatible with both existing and new technology increasing its future sustainability as a viable statewide interoperability solution.

Prioritization: High
Time Frame: Short

Strategic Initiative #2 – Enhance Modern Regional Systems

Description: As the state continues to identify, design, and construct the 7/800 MHz trunked radio network, local networks will continue to require maintenance and enhancement. These local enhancements will be required to support regional network applications that are 7/800 MHz compatible and benefit multiple users in all disciplines including local, tribal, state, and non-governmental organizations. Federal users must be, and will be, invited to participate as appropriate in the enhanced regional systems that provide mutually beneficial coverage and services.

Prioritization: High
Time Frame: Medium

Strategic Initiative #3 – Expand Communications Governance Model

Description: As the maturity of regional, shared operable and interoperable communication systems increases statewide in Arizona, the existing governance structure will also need to mature accordingly. The governance structure going forward will need to be responsible for the technical

"day to day" operations of the new and emerging systems as well as maintain responsibility for the strategic direction pursued in accordance with this SCIP. The ongoing maturation process of statewide communications in Arizona specifically calls for a governing body tasked with making funding and procurement decisions including the system(s) life cycle management to ensure timely system upgrades and replacement. Therefore, the existing governance structure needs to be enhanced with the appropriate authority, participation, and local and state support.

Prioritization: High
Time Frame: Short

Strategic Initiative #4 – Upgrade the Statewide Microwave Backbone Infrastructure

Description: The Department of Public Safety will continue to upgrade the state microwave system from its current analog technology to state-of-the-art digital technology. The upgrade will provide the infrastructure needed for current and planned public safety communications systems that will allow voice and data sharing capabilities. Additionally, many repair parts for the current analog system are not available or very difficult to locate thus allowing the current system to be more susceptible to failure.

Prioritization: High
Time Frame: Long

Strategic Initiative #5 – Develop a Comprehensive Plan to Address Catastrophic Communications Loss

Description: In the event of a catastrophic loss of communications, there should be a plan in place to as rapidly as possible restore basic communications for the continuity of government and public safety communications. The technology used should be redundant, ensure there are no single points of failure, and include multiple technologies.

Prioritization: High
Time Frame: Short

Strategic Initiative #6 – Develop a Long-Term Funding Strategy

Description: A comprehensive funding strategy is essential to support and implement this SCIP and sustain interoperable communications for Arizona's public safety entities. A dedicated, sustainable, and focused funding stream allows planners to appropriately invest in positive communications solutions and make significant impacts toward closing identified communications gaps.

Prioritization: High
Time Frame: Short

Strategic Initiative #7 – Develop a Statewide Communications Migration Plan

Description: Arizona is developing a statewide communications plan that includes updating of a statewide microwave system, state agency migration, and local, tribal, and federal connectivity to a 7/800 MHz Project-25 radio system. Additionally, local, tribal, and federal agencies will be given the option to join this new radio system as it is deployed in their area. As this takes place, the state must create a migration plan for themselves and others (who may wish to join them on this new

radio system). The migration plan may or may not be a one-time change in technology, and is dependent on the current technology deployed by an entity, and current connection to the state system, if any.

Prioritization: Medium
Time Frame: Medium

Strategic Initiative #8 – Develop the PSCC Long-Term Solution – High-Level Network Connections Component

Description: The statewide system is planned as the ultimate approach to interoperability among all public safety entities in the state. The planned system is an open standards, compliant (Project-25, Telecommunication Industry Association-102), 7/800 MHz trunked radio system. It will have sufficient capacity for state agencies and those local, federal, and tribal agencies who desire to participate. It can be expanded in capacity to serve additional agencies and extended to cover additional land areas. It will have high-level network connections to allow existing regional radio systems to be interconnected to the statewide system.

Prioritization: High
Time Frame: Long

Strategic Initiative #9 – Develop a Statewide Communications Plan Addressing Mass Transit, Transportation, and Ports

Description: In the event of a major incident, the need to communicate with mass transit, transportation, and ports becomes critical for evacuation of areas of the state. Currently, Arizona has three major airports, limited intercity bus transportation, and limited train transportation. For the most part, incident evacuation is seen as a requirement of local governments and the state would typically use whatever facilities local governments have available.

Prioritization: Medium
Time Frame: Short

Strategic Initiative #10 – Develop a Statewide Comprehensive Communications Training and Exercise Plan

Description: Although the state has an extensive training plan, they do not offer specific NIMS-required communications plans. Specifically, Communications Unit Leader (COML) and Communications Technician (COMT) are not offered by DEMA, rather they are taught by the State Fire Chief's Association. As DEMA is responsible for all training for state and local government, and responsible for ensuring NIMS-compliance, it is clear that these classes should be included in the DEMA curriculum.

Prioritization: Medium
Time Frame: Medium

Strategic Initiative #11 – Develop a Plan for Statewide Data Interoperability

Description: Most agencies in Arizona have communications systems that interconnect computers at their fixed facilities. Many agencies also have mobile computer data systems allowing personnel

to have data access capabilities in the field. Except for a limited number of agencies sharing the DPS mobile data system, data communications interoperability is mostly unknown. The need for data interoperability is also unknown and has not been studied. This initiative will determine data interoperability needs and move the state to fill the needs that are found.

Prioritization: Medium
Time Frame: Long

Strategic Initiative #12 – Standardize Standard Operating Procedures for Statewide Interoperable Communications Solutions

Description: Statewide interoperable communications solutions will require standardized SOPs in order to assure user conformity, ease of administration, and user realization of the highest level of interoperability. The PSCC will therefore leverage member input toward the development of SOPs specifically pertinent to region-wide or statewide interoperable communications solutions such as AIRS, STR equipment, NPSPAC mutual aid frequencies, etc.

Prioritization: Low
Time Frame: Medium

Strategic Initiative #13 – Develop an Interstate Interoperability Plan

Description: Interoperability within a state is a challenge because of spectrum, jurisdictional boundaries, and funding mechanisms. This challenge is magnified significantly when states attempt to cross one another's boundaries. Most often, it is counties needing to communicate with other counties across state boundaries, so if an incident crosses a county or state boundary, there is a need to communicate. No matter who needs to communicate, there are two issues: technology and governance/jurisdiction. Technology may be simple or complex. It may be as simple as switching to another frequency on a radio, or as complex as creating a console patch, or use of a gateway. The more difficult issue is that of jurisdiction or governance. Often it is a question of "with whom can we talk, under what circumstances, and how." This initiative is important because it informs the way that state agencies will communicate with each other in times of emergency. As crises cross state lines, communications between states should be part of a communication plan.

Prioritization: Low
Time Frame: Long

Strategic Initiative #14 – Improve Cooperation with and the Integration of Tribal Entities into Interoperable Communications Functions

Description: Thus far, interest from the tribal communities concerning the interoperability projects has been limited. It is believed, as the plans for development of the statewide system become more firm, that tribal agencies will consider the new system as a platform to improve their own systems. In addition, as interoperability plans mature and systems such as AIRS gain success; tribal agencies will become interested in the other state systems as a means of operability as well as interoperability. The state must continue reaching out to the tribes and educating them to develop the desire to participate.

Prioritization: Medium
Time Frame: Long

Strategic Initiative #15 – Develop an Interoperable Communications Strategy with Mexico

Description: Emergency operations occurring near the border between Arizona and Mexico may require mutual aid efforts by parties from both sides of the border to intercommunicate. Political (treaties), language, and technology hinder international interoperability. The two countries and related states must develop an understanding of each other's practices and systems and jointly determine a means of interoperability.

Prioritization: Low
Time Frame: Long

Funding

The SCIP points out that the comprehensive statewide budget for the Arizona interoperable communications plan will be published when the planning phase for the expansive project is complete.

Since the inception of the PSCC, a substantial amount of funds have been sought and successfully secured to establish interoperability in Arizona. The state uses a combination of funding mechanisms to ensure the forward momentum of this effort.

The SCIP provides several examples of secured funding that have already been put to work, including the first allocation of $3 million to the PSCC in 2004 to start the process necessary to form the framework of an interoperability system and conceptual design. A state-of-the-art 7/800 MHz fully interoperable, standards-based radio Demonstration Project is part of what will be launched in this process.

Since that time, the SCIP reveals the largest investment made by the state, using a combination of State General Funds, State Highway Funds, and State Game and Fish Funds, has been made on the statewide microwave system. These funds are all non-lapsing and account for an investment of $7.599 million over three years. To augment the state's investment in the microwave system, additional grant funds will also be used. The state anticipates using grants beginning in 2008 from the Department of Homeland Security totaling an additional $4.8 million over three years.

The SCIP documents how additional investments will be made by the state in 2008 using both General Funds and Anti-Racketeering Funds and how the state will be investing an additional $1,383,300 in lapsing funds to complete the statewide interoperability design. An additional $2.2 million from the (non-lapsing) Anti-Racketeering Fund will be used to fund the system detailed design according to the SCIP.

When the statewide system's budget is fully determined, the PSCC will review a series of options that will be available for funding this project including, but not limited to, general funds from state government, a mixture of state and federal funds, public and private partnerships, and lease to purchase agreements.

The state has also applied for Homeland Security grants, along with other communications grants, and it is anticipated the state will continue to do so as outlined in the SCIP.

Conclusion

In addition to detailed examinations of the topics contained within this Executive Summary; the Arizona SCIP provides an explicit overview of the state of Arizona, its demographics and geographic features. It also describes the emergency response community within the state.

The heart and essence of the Arizona SCIP are the detailed plan it lays out for accomplishing Arizona's goals as they relate to the state's vitally important emergency services communications system. The SCIP demonstrates Arizona's commitment to its citizens by providing an almost immediate solution to the state's interoperability woes while outlining a long-term strategy that will allow the state to meet all of the interoperability needs of its emergency response community.

As outlined in the SCIP, the state will continue to apply for grants and legislative funding with the sole purpose of obtaining the resources necessary to continue adhering to the long-term communications strategy which will dramatically help protect lives and property in Arizona.

In order for Arizona to continue adhering to the long-term communications strategy, significant financial, political, and public support is needed.

To find out how you can support the effort to dramatically advance Arizona's emergency services communications system, which serves as a lifeline to those who safeguard Arizona's citizens, please contact the Arizona Public Safety Communications Commission in Phoenix at (602) 271-7400. Or, visit the PSCC website at www.azdps.gov/pscc

It should be noted that the PSCC and SIEC will oversee the establishment of a governance board for the new long-term interoperability solution to institute policies, Standard Operating Procedures, and a revenue stream to fund its continued operation and eventual replacement.

Addenda: Development and Maintenance of SCIP

Federal Sources

The United States Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Statewide Interoperability Planning Guidebook (May 2007) criteria was used as a primary guideline in formulating the SCIP. This guide and its criteria help define an actionable way for first responders and their leadership to use interoperable communications to improve public safety coordination, response effectiveness, and safety for both the responders and citizens in emergencies. Throughout the SCIP document, the use of the Interoperability Continuum developed by the DHS/Office of Emergency Communications (now responsible for the SAFECOM initiatives) provided a guide to illustrate a clear and concise method to assess the interoperability, governance, and technology capabilities within the state.

Contributors

The actual localized information used to populate the Arizona SCIP was gathered through a considerable number of meetings, interviews, and document review processes. These documents and interviews represent all agencies operating in the state and further consider all public safety disciplines and all levels of government. Cross-jurisdictional and cross-discipline participation was achieved in a couple of ways. State, county, city, district, tribal, and federal agency representatives attended PSCC meetings. Practitioners, at all levels of government, were interviewed.

In populating the SCIP, the Project Team reviewed work completed by the PSCC in previous years, including the statewide wireless public safety solutions' Concept of Operations (ConOps).

Arizona's methodology for the SCIP followed the many years of development of other plans in this state, with each asking for broad-scale input and comment. The PSCC and SIEC, by inviting over 1,000 individuals representing every facet of the public safety community of interest to participate in this process, showed tremendous commitment to the state's desire to involve as many interested parties as possible in the SCIP process.

Drafts of the SCIP were posted on the PSCC and SIEC websites. All local, tribal, federal, and non-governmental public safety entities were offered an opportunity to participate in the development of this plan by providing comment and participation in forums and interviews. The plan became the basis of the PSIC grants. Each of the state's RACs was given copies of the plan and asked to participate in this process. Each of the state's EOCs was asked to participate in and provide information for this SCIP, with their responses representing over 90 percent of the state's population.

In August 2007, the PSCC contracted with a team of consulting companies to assist in developing the SCIP.

As the SCIP progressed, there were a multitude of opportunities for all stakeholders to review and continue to shape the document through input and suggestions. As the document neared completion, final review forums were conducted in public meetings open to any interested parties with the final SCIP Version 1.0 approved at a special meeting on November 28 held by the PSCC.

Review and Update Process

Recognizing that the statewide interoperability plan is a dynamic, living document, the PSCC has created a comprehensive review and update process involving the emergency responder community of interest.

In adhering to this process, the PSCC Executive Director or his designee, at least once a year starting in August 2008, is tasked with ensuring proper review of the statewide interoperability plan. The frequency of this review may increase depending upon the current interoperable environment assessment and completed strategic initiatives.

The PSCC Executive Director will publish in advance of the next regularly scheduled PSCC meeting an agenda with an agenda item to update the SCIP Plan. Additionally, the PSCC sends notifications to the emergency responder community of interest advising its members of the upcoming meeting. A call for volunteers will be made to ensure the plan is vetted and reviewed by a representative sample of all jurisdictions and emergency responder disciplines in the state.

At the PSCC meeting, the PSCC Chair will receive a recommendations report from the PSCC staff for the review committee. The PSCC Chair shall assign accepted topics for review to the appropriate review committee member(s).

The Review Committee Chair shall hold open public meeting(s) at times and locations accessible by those willing to participate in this review. Input to this Plan is not to be limited to those appointed to serve on the committee; rather it is open to all who wish to attend and participate in the advertised meetings. Additionally, the Committee entertains written responses.

At the conclusion of the review, further protocols have been created so the recommended changes to the SCIP that arise from the open public meeting(s) make their way to the PSCC Executive Director and then to a regularly scheduled PSCC meeting where they will be discussed, approved, or rejected.

After receiving PSCC approval, the revised SCIP will be distributed according to additional protocols. The revised Plan will include a change log indicating details of the new revisions such as an assigned revision number, change date, description of change, effective date of change, and an official signature.